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THE
SAILOR
LOST AND FOUND.

A TRUE STORY.

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THE SAILOR LOST AND FOUND.

A TRUE STORY.

On the morning of the 25th of February, 1851, the dawning light disclosed a scene of the deepest distress on the broad expanse of the North sea. Racked in body and tortured in mind, four successive days had James D—— and his companions strained their eyes in search of a sail. Death was apparently approaching. The suffering from cold was intense. Their position on the mast, the only remains of their vessel, which had foundered, and to which they were lashed, being such as to preclude the possibility of their moving. Wave after wave dashed over them; hour after hour rolled on; but not one speck betokening a sail darkened the horizon. Apart from the consciousness of present suffering, there might be traced on the countenances of all, but James D——, a fulfilment of the truth, “the wicked have no bands in their death.” There appeared a sullen carelessness of what was to be, when the last sigh had been drawn, and the spirit had returned to the God who gave it. Occasionally the awful silence which reigned on the face of the waters was broken by the expression of a hope from one of the sufferers, that “they would fare as well as their neighbors, were they unable to weather the present storm.”

No such ill-founded hopes lessened what appeared to be the dying agonies of James D——; the terrors

of "the worm that dieth not, and the fire that never shall be quenched," seemed to be placed before him: and with bitter groans, as he gazed around, above, beneath, he exclaimed, "I am a lost sinner, for I have sinned against light. My mother's prayers and advice I scorned, and now my soul is damned—I am without hope."

But deliverance was at hand. "A sail! a sail!" was feebly uttered by one of the sufferers. There were two men on that mast whose hearts were never to throb again, either in expectation of woe or joy; the waves had done their appointed work, and the souls of J. O—— and F. T—— stood before a "reconciled Father in Christ," or an angry Judge.

A few moments of intense anxiety was still the portion of the surviving crew, for it was by no means certain that the vessel saw them; but soon she appeared to be bearing up to them, and James D——, and his three companions rescued from destruction, were carried below; James D—— in a state of insensibility.

Again the bright morning light streamed in upon a scene of suffering, in which James D—— bore his sad part. The dead and the dying were around, and again his countenance bore the marks of despair.

"Now," he cried out as he tossed about on his feverish bed, "now I am, indeed, without hope; the good resolutions I made on the mast have been broken, and now the Lord will laugh at my calamity, mock at my fear: for oh! how often have I refused His gracious invitations."

Days passed on, when, in the ordering of God's providence, a captain in the navy was led to the bedside of James D——; but oh, how changed was he from the hardened sailor of other days! "Sir," said the sufferer,

as his visitor enquired whether he had "a good hope through grace," "Sir, I have a hope which is as an anchor to my soul, both sure and steadfast. I have been led to cast anchor on the Rock of ages, and all the waves of time, and all the storms of eternity, shall be unable to unmoor me. This illness, sir, has been blessed to me, through the goodness of God; a book of sermons sent to me by Mr. —, was the means of bringing me to Jesus, my *only* hope, my precious Saviour. I was the child of many prayers: they were registered on high: they are now answered."

Many interesting visits were paid to the dying man by Captain —.

The Spirit which worketh, as well as "maketh intercession according to the will of God," appeared swiftly completing the work of sanctification in his soul.

In the course of conversation, Captain — asked him what were his feelings when lashed to the mast.

"Oh, sir," he replied, "they were awful; I have hardly dared bring them to my recollection! At times, from the excessive cold, I was nearly insensible: but there were moments of horror quite indescribable; *hell* seemed to accompany *every wave*; and each wave brought hell more vividly before my eyes."

Captain — asked him if he did not try to pray. "No, sir," was his answer, "Satan would not *allow* me to pray: he whispered to me, *You* have nothing to do with prayer, there is no hope. This is all I can remember, for by the time the vessel that picked us up hailed us, I was insensible to all outward things."

About two months passed, when in one of Captain — visits, James D—— informed him, with a sad countenance, that there was a proposition to remove him to —, many miles from his present scene of suffering.

But one thought seemed to distress the dying man. "Sir," he exclaimed with deep feeling, "I shall lose your visits!" After a moment's pause, as faith and hope asserted their power to make up for every loss, he added with a look of earnest thankfulness, "I leave this place with that which can never be lost."

Reader, before you read these lines, James D—— will be in the full enjoyment of *that which never can be lost*; and **WHAT IS IT?** All that is comprised in being an "heir of God and a joint heir with Christ"—a new heart, a living faith. Have you got these things? Can you look up, and thank God that *you* have that which never can be lost? Then fear not difficulties, fear not trials, but "Go forward."

Reader, have you *not* got that which never can be lost? then sit down quietly and seek rightly to estimate your misery.

You have life, but in your calling it is frequently exposed to danger—**IT MAY BE LOST!** You have health to-day, but to-morrow—**IT MAY BE LOST!** You have regular employment now, perhaps a boat of your own, but one storm, and—**IT MAY BE LOST!** You have a happy home, wife and children, but you cannot shut to your door, and shut out death—**THEY MAY BE LOST!** You have a soul, and—**IT IS A LOST SOUL!** There is but one thing which will not be *lost*, if you continue in your present state. Sinner, do you wish to know what is your only *certain possession*? It is—**ETERNAL MISERY!** All your earthly blessings will soon be lost, and heaven is also lost!

Oh, turn not away! Stay not to curse the day in which you were born, but listen to words of hope. "The Son of man came to seek and to save that which *was lost*."

Do you ask for His authority? He was "sent of God." Do you say, Is He willing? Hear His words: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And, again, "Him that cometh unto me I will in nowise cast out." Do you inquire as to His power? We point to James D——, once miserable though in health, now happy though in a hospital on a death-bed.*

Go to Jesus. Pray to Jesus. Ask Him to send His Holy Spirit to change your heart and lead you to wash in "the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness;" and then, though frequently tossed about by the waves of tribulation, you will never lose sight of Jesus, "the bright and morning star." As regards your soul, the promise is, that "the waters shall not overflow thee;" and then, though your grave may be in the wide seas, and the thoughtless world and your own acquaintances may forget you, not even laying your death to heart for a moment, you will but be "taken away from the evil to come;" your name will be "written in heaven," and when "the sea gives up the dead which are in it," you, in a brighter land, where there will be "no more sea," will gaze upon Him, who rose as "the Sun of righteousness," on the ocean of your despair and misery.

You may have trials, heavy trials, but they will not be *lost trials*; they will lead you closer to Jesus: you will have difficulties, but fear no evil.

"Loud roaring, the billows would thee overwhelm,
But skilful the Pilot that sits at the helm ;
His wisdom, His power, His faithfulness stand,
Engaged to conduct thee in safety to land."

Reader, seek *that which cannot be lost*—a saving interest in the blood of THE SINNER'S FRIEND, and then you can sing—

Sav'd by blood, I live to tell
What the love of Christ hath done ;
He redeem'd my soul from hell,
Of a rebel made a son.
Oh ! I tremble still to think,
How secure I liv'd in sin ;
Sporting on destruction's brink,
Yet preserv'd from falling in.

In His own appointed hour,
To my heart the Saviour spoke ;
Touch'd me by His Spirit's power,
And my dangerous slumber broke.
Then I saw and own'd my guilt ;
Soon my gracious Lord reply'd—
“ Fear not, I my blood have spilt,
'Twas for such as thee I died.”

Shame and wonder, joy and love,
All at once possess'd my heart ;
Can I hope thy grace to prove,
After acting such a part ?
“ Thou hast greatly sinn'd,” He said,
“ But, I freely all forgive :
I myself thy debt have paid,
Now I bid thee rise and live.”

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